

# SUPPLEMENT

## TO THE

# NONCONFORMIST.

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GRATIS.

### A RETROSPECT OF ENGLISH CONGREGATIONALISM.

It is impossible to say how much the men who take the initial step in what ultimately proves to be a great movement see of its future grandeur. Some probably know not what they are doing, and bear their testimony for their own time only, and with no thought of what is to come from it. Others, standing on the mountain top of Faith, have given to them a prophetic spirit by which they are assured of the conquering growth of the truth which they proclaim. They can see far off men of all nations accepting it, and the Spirit of all Truth bearing to it His witness. Even if during their lifetime it should seem to die, they know that it will rise again and thenceforth be clothed with immortality.

Whether Richard Fitz, pastor, as far as is known, of the first Congregational church in England, had in his higher moods, a glimpse of the future of Congregationalism in England, is very questionable. All that we know of him is that he had in 1568 a small church in Blackfriars, and we know the names of some of the members of that church. Their moral courage and spiritual faithfulness are attested by the fact of their daring to set up independent worship in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and daring also to suffer the penalty. But it is altogether improbable that only one Independent church existed at this time. Knowing what we do of the character of former religious movements, such as that in Wycliffe's age, and of the different ways in which religious life has the tendency to organise itself, we may be assured that wherever there has been a strong religious feeling and an unfettered conscience, there Independency has established itself.

The probability of there having been many Independent churches at this period is established by the fact that, only twelve years later, Sir Walter Raleigh alluded to the "thousands" of their adherents. Robert Browne, whose name comes next in history, first directed public attention to their principles and first formularised them. Though a turbulent and hasty man, with less graciousness than power, he did the great and invaluable service of bearing aloft a testimony. When any man does this he discovers innumerable and hitherto unsuspected adherents. Such a discovery did Browne, and at the same time the Government of Elizabeth make. Here was the planting and sudden growth of Independency. Next came the inevitable era of persecution.

It is strange that no one who took part in the proceedings connected with the laying of the foundation-stone of the Memorial Hall last Friday seemed to be aware that the assembled congregation stood on the most sacred spot connected with the history of Independency in England. There once stood the old Fleet Prison. In the Fleet Prison the earliest martyrs of Independency were confined, and from that prison they were hurried to the scaffold. Whitgift's controller, in stating the nature of the indictment against Barrowe and Greenwood, narrates how they were brought before the Star Chamber in 1586, and "enlarged upon bonds but all in vain, for, after their liberty, they burst into further extremities, and were again committed to the Fleet, July 20, 1588, where they published their scandalous and seditious writings for which they were proceeded against at Justice Hall, near Newgate." From the Fleet, in 1590, Greenwood issued his answer to Giffard, signing himself "Christ's poor afflicted prisoner in the Fleet at London, for the Truth of the Gospel." Then he and Barrowe were tied to a cart and borne to Tyburn. To the Fleet, Johnson was committed in 1693, and thence issued the memorial from the Various Independent prisoners in the London gaols, stating their "miserable usage," "laden with as many irons as they could bear"—"aged men, aged

women, and young maidens" being confined for years amongst the vilest prisoners. Later on, in 1637, Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton were committed by Laud to the Fleet, from whence they were taken to the pillory, branded with hot irons, and their ears cut off; sent back again to the Fleet and thence to their respective prisons. Have we not all heard of the crowd that lined the streets and roads of London from the Fleet "till beyond Highgate" when Prynne was conveyed to Lancaster Castle? On the ground where these men had suffered, which they had trod for weary years, the Congregationalists of England little more than two hundred years later are erecting their Memorial Hall.

The execution of Barrowe, Greenwood, and Penry, and the slow murder of hundreds of other, but nameless martyrs, did not, strange to say, root out Independency. Another plan, therefore, was adopted. The adherents of the new doctrine were banished the kingdom. The gaols being crowded with them were thus emptied, but in another year they were crowded again. To this banishment—so strangely and marvellously in His "mysterious way" does the Almighty work—the Churches of Holland, with Johnson, Ainsworth, and Robinson as pastors, owed their existence, whence New England was colonised by the Separatists. And yet there was no difference of doctrine between these men and their persecutors, for, as the memorialists of 1593 stated, "We profess the same faith and truth of the Gospel which Her Majesty and your honours, the whole land, and all the Reformed Churches under Heaven, this day, do hold and maintain." That faith was the Calvinistic, and perhaps the Congregationalists have been, on the whole, the most consistent Calvinistic body in England. They suffered, not for doctrine, but for Independency, as such—for opposition, that is to say, to a tyrannical and unscriptural prelacy.

The era of Persecution lasted nearly until the death of Laud, and was followed with marvellous rapidity by the era of Power. In less than fifty years Independency was transferred from the prison to the palace. The few hundred of men and women languishing in Bridewell, the Clink, the Gatehouse, the Limbo (Newgate), the Fleet, the Compter, and the White Lion, were succeeded by Cromwell and his Ironsides, and the host of the Commonwealth statesmen and armies. It is acknowledged that these men governed England well—gave it, in fact, such a government as for justice, for freedom, and for morality, had never been seen in the world before. But we have always, ourselves, believed that the number of Independents at this period has been over-estimated by the imagination. There were very few in the Westminster Assembly, and Clarendon tells us that the Long Parliament was a Parliament of Churchmen. It was the strength of Cromwell's name and power that made the Independent party. That party was a sudden growth, arising out of the attractive power of a marvellous man, and it fell to pieces as soon as the attraction ceased to exist. But the administrative Government, as long as it lasted, was composed for the most part of Independents; and it was one to which their successors can point with as much pride as to the sufferings of their martyrs.

Had it not been for the ejection of 1662, the Independents in the latter half of the seventeenth century, would have been a comparatively small body. Cromwell allowed Presbyterians, Puritans, Independents, and Baptists in the Church; the Revolution came, and the whole of them were precipitated from power to what was intended to be disgrace. But the descent was borne with the same fortitude that other mere vicissitudes of life had been endured. The prison, the palace, and the cottage are much alike to the Christian man, and he can serve God equally well in either condition. What a marvellous history that must have been—the history of the men who were made

homeless by the prelatical hate of Charles's bishops! No written narrative will ever, or can ever, do justice to it. What does any one ever know of another man's life and sufferings? From this second persecution, however, the Independents gained as much as they did from the first. It gave them, above all, a literature. At this time lived Goodwin, Owen, and Clarkson, to be followed by Watts and Mead, and soon afterwards by Doddridge. We have, in these names, the most eminent representatives of the culture and scholarship of the old Independents, and they embrace the varying theology of the denomination, from pure Calvinism to pure Arminianism—the dilution of the latter, however, being very small. As the ejected ministers died out, both the strength and the culture of the body seemed to diminish, and it suffered, as all England suffered, from the poisonous breath of licentiousness which passed through the nation; followed as it was, and always is, with nations as well as with individuals, by an era of unbelief and scepticism. The Congregationalists—as they now came to be called—maintained their ground during this period, and no more. They began to recover and advance only as soon as they became conscious of the duty of extension and the work of foreign missionary enterprise became a matter of conscientious duty. The life of Christian life is self-sacrifice, and when self-sacrifice began self-development immediately followed.

The period that succeeded this may be termed the period of revival, and from the date of its beginning may be traced the increasing prosperity of the Congregational churches. Their history since then has been a grand one, and no names have stand higher in the roll of the Christian ministry than the names of the Congregational ministers of the present century. Yet curiously enough it is only of recent years that the denomination as such should have denied the right of the State to control or to support the Christian religion. All the old Independents, from Browne and Barrowe down to Doddridge, were lacking in this respect, and even in later years—in our own times—the denomination has been less responsive to the call of political equality than any other of the elder Nonconformist bodies. Happily, little of this inconsistency or inertness now remains. In activity and weight of aggression, in this respect, it is second to none.

What names we might recal, what services rendered, what duty discharged, what extension of Christ's kingdom might we not record, by a survey of the earlier years of this century! Palmer and Bogue come first; then we have the curious succession of the Claytons and Dr. Collyer, with the memorable name and inestimable work of Dr. James Bennett. Then rise up, in equal prominence, William Jay and John Angell James; and it seems but as yesterday that Dr. Pye-Smith, John Burnet, and Robert Vaughan were amongst us. But although these men and others were of larger stature than the majority of their brethren, the work of Congregationalism has been done by those whose names are for the most part unrecorded—faithful pastors and faithful members of churches who have lived in comparative obscurity, and have died, and few have known of their death. These are the men who make the strength of a church, and who would have done, and have done, their work had there been no great name to make prominent or to adorn their order of faith.

Just a hundred years ago, in 1772, an inquiry was made into the number of Nonconformist congregations of all kinds in England and Wales. It was found to be 1,252; of which 449 were Baptist, and the remaining 803 Presbyterian and Independent. Just "sixty years ago" another inquiry was made, and it was found that the total number of churches was 2,002, of which 1,024 belonged to the Congregationalists. At the present time the total number of Nonconformist congregations is believed to be considerably in excess of 20,000, of which

the Congregationalists claim about 3,000. In the mere number of separate churches, therefore, this body has been trebled within less than two generations, while in the number of its adherents it has probably been multiplied sixfold.

## CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

### SKETCHES OF THE MEETINGS.

(By a Looker-on.)

It is a mistake to commence what is called the adjourned meeting of the Union so early as half-past nine in the morning. It is comparatively unobjectionable on the first day, for then the bulk of the members come up fresh and vigorous from the country, and it is known that early attendance is needful to secure a comfortable hearing of the chairman's address. But the conditions are all changed on Friday; for the delegates have become demoralised by a succession of meetings, to say nothing of "doing" the Academy, visiting friends, and other innocent spring dissipations. Moreover, the address has been given, and there is generally the expectation that nothing particular will happen at the beginning of the sitting. So it happened that last Friday morning, when the chairman took his seat, the attendance was very small, and it was evident, from the state of the galleries, that the public interest had also somewhat expended itself.

By way of accommodation to this state of things, it was agreed that the least debateable portion of the "Standing Orders," though last in order, should be taken first, and while the provisions relating to "meetings," "grant for autumnal meeting," and "annual subscriptions" were being talked over, the members dropped in, though the attendance was at no time very large. The standing orders are supplementary to the new constitution of the Union adopted last autumn, and relate to matters either not important enough to include in the constitution, or involving details in regard to which changes may be needed with comparative frequency. The chief debateable point was the mode of appointing the chairman of the Union, in regard to which there prevailed some time ago considerable distrust, arising from the suspicion that, while the appointment was vested in the Union at large, the real nomination was not unfrequently the act of official persons. To meet that feeling, the committee's recommendation to the Union was the result of a ballot or ballots, which beyond question made the act that of the committee. That, however, did not satisfy all parties, and so the committee proposed that the gentlemen thought eligible for the chair should, previous to the business meeting, be nominated by not fewer than ten representative members, and that a ballot or ballots should be taken at that meeting until a majority of those voting should be secured for one of the persons nominated. Two objections of an opposite kind were taken to this plan, viz., by those who wished the question settled by the meeting without previous nomination, and by those who wished to retain the existing plan, and so get rid of the complications involved in that now proposed. Several amendments were moved, and discussed in a quiet, committee-like way; but the committee—unlike the Government—has a working majority which never fails it, so that all the amendments were rejected by large majorities, and the standing orders, as prepared by them, were adopted almost without alteration. This business occupied till about twelve o'clock, and must have been tedious, not to say somewhat unintelligible, to the occupants of the galleries.

This disposed of, the Rev. ANDREW REED, the representative of the Union to the sister Union of Scotland, gave an interesting and genial report of his visit; describing some of the ecclesiastical peculiarities of Presbyterianism, and also assuring the meeting of the warm feelings of regard which Scottish Congregationalists had for their English brethren.

"Councils of Reference" stood next on the paper, and this subject was introduced by Dr. MULLENS, whose visit to America enabled him to speak with fullness of information, as well as with confidence, of the Councils of New England. These, he said, combined the fundamental principles of Independency with mutual help on the part of Independent churches. They formed an essential part of the Congregational system; were completely organised; and were worked by means of judiciously framed rules. In some States these councils were permanent, and had juridical powers, and these involved a compromise between Congregationalism

and Presbyterians. Such bodies were, however, objected to elsewhere; the dangers being thought to be greater than the advantages. Dr. Mullens thought that they should be advisory only, and also temporary in their character, and suggested that they were needed in this country, to prevent disunion, and to extend Congregational influence. They would frequently render it unnecessary to resort to a Vice-Chancellor's court in case of disputes, would facilitate the choice of pastors, would afford guidance to students on their entrance into the ministry; and while not interfering with real Independency, would save them from selfish isolation. The objections urged against the system were, he thought, phantoms; their non-existence being proved by the experience of the American churches, which enjoyed complete liberty, with the advantages of brotherly co-operation.

Dr. ALLON moved a resolution in harmony with the terms of Dr. Mullens's paper, and from the knowledge which he also had acquired in America, gave a general testimony in favour of the proposed system, accompanied with some details as to its working. The Rev. THOS. JAMES followed, with some personal incidents showing the need for something analogous to the plan proposed, and some speakers spoke briefly, and more or less approvingly. The Rev. J. STATHAM, however, while approving of the action of Councils of Reference as arbitrators, or advisers, in cases of dispute or difficulty, objected to a board which should concern itself with the appointment of ministers. Dr. ALLON on this explained that by "settlement," in the resolution, was intended the ordination of ministers, and not the choice of them. But the Rev. S. PARKINSON urged that, if ministers were not to be ordained until they had satisfied a council as to the soundness of their theological beliefs, that would involve what would be a violation of Congregational principles. And, as the discussion proceeded, it became evident that the way was not so clear as the proposers of the resolution had appeared to think, and in the end it was agreed that it would be well to consider the subject further, and with more preciseness, at the autumnal meeting.

This finished the proceedings, and there only remained the votes of thanks—to the authorities of the Poultry Chapel for the use of the building, and to the chairman. In reply to the first, Dr. PARKER created some amusement by stating that the congregation had bought a site for their projected new chapel near the Holborn Viaduct, close to the church but some distance from its principles.

Dr. KENNEDY, also, in allusion to his address, said that whatever topics the chairman of the union discoursed upon, there were always people who thought he should have taken some other topic, and that he had received advice on the subject from kind friends up to within three or four days of the date when the address was to be delivered! This closed the business proceedings of the May session of the Union, the interest and importance of which, in one respect, was equal to that of any of its predecessors.

The erection of the Congregational Memorial Hall is in the hands of a special committee, and not of the Congregational Union, but, by a happy arrangement, the laying of the memorial stone was made to fit in with the Union meetings, and the Union committee resolved that the *conversazione* on Friday evening should be supplementary to the stone-laying. Fortunately, the weather, which had been showery the rest of the week, was fine on Friday afternoon, and so a good company assembled to witness the ceremony, and there was an excellent muster of leading Nonconformists, both lay and ministerial. Viewed subjectively, the ceremony was interesting enough, though it could not be said to be either picturesque or impressive; but it is very rarely that stone-laying is either the one or the other. No doubt the position which the hall will occupy, on the site of the Fleet Prison, and not many yards from the Ludgate-hill end of Farringdon-street, is a very good one—provided, that is, that the roar of the passing vehicles in front, and the gasping and shrieking of the locomotives on the London and Chatham Railway behind, do not prove to be as annoying to the future occupants as they did to the spectators and auditors on this occasion. But the surroundings, in the shape of rubbish heaps, rough scaffolding, and placards advertising journals with "the largest circulation in the world," made it necessary to draw a good deal upon both the memory and the imagination to realise either the significance of the proceedings, or the character of the edifice about to be erected.

After the singing of a hymn, Mr. J. Remington Mills, who has been closely associated with the

project, both as a large subscriber, and as one who at a particular stage undertook considerable responsibility, proceeded to lay the stone, which is a huge block of polished granite, facing Farringdon-street. He then gave a brief address, in which he referred to the difficulties which had tried the patience of the committee, even more than of the subscribers, and said that he regarded it as a providential event that they had been led to give up the land originally purchased, and to obtain that site, which would admirably serve both for the proposed Hall and the various offices. He attached great importance to the library which would find a home in the building, and expressed a hope that the valuable volumes given by Mr. Joshua Wilson would form the nucleus of a complete collection. Mr. Binney followed in an impressive and most suitable prayer, offered with a degree of energy necessary under the circumstances, but not characteristic of Mr. Binney. Nothing, I may add, could be more striking in its way than the figure of the venerable minister, as he stood erect on the huge block, wearing the black velvet cap which one now associates with Mr. Binney, as with some of the pictures of the old Puritans. Next, Dr. Halley delivered an address, read from a rough improvised reading-desk, and read with a vigour which showed that the venerable ex-President of New College is still hale and hearty. It was a comprehensive address, mainly historical in character, and contained some very effective, as well as vivacious, passages. Especially clever was the mode in which he contrived to introduce the names of many of the ejected clergy of 1662, by suggesting that if, instead of building a hall for useful purposes, they had resolved to erect an ornamental monument, they might have so grouped the figures as to point to the adjacent parishes in which some of them laboured, and also further off to distant parishes in surrounding counties.

The address was somewhat lengthy, and Dr. Halley was followed by Dr. Kennedy and others; so that the proceedings were not concluded till after the time announced for the tea-taking at the Cannon-street Hotel.

This meeting at the Cannon-street Hotel, officially described as a *conversazione*, was a most agreeable and successful close to the engagements of the week. Tea and coffee were provided in the up-stairs suite of rooms, and for some time there was a constant stream of opposite currents of people on the staircase, ascending to the tea-room, or descending to the great hall. In that spacious area, which, if architecturally fine, is very bad for hearing, the ladies and gentlemen gathered by degrees and slowly settled down, till the room was comfortably filled. Mr. Hannay, the secretary, who looked as if he had had a hard week's work, seemed a little anxious about the delay in providing refreshment for so large a company. But his guests were patient, and quite ready to fill up the interval with mutual greetings and conversation. There were present most of the leading representatives of Congregationalism in the metropolis, a good sprinkling of ladies, and a large number of country delegates. On the platform behind the chair was a very efficient choir connected with Dr. Allon's congregation, strengthened by other friends, and as a book containing the programme of the service of song, with the music, was distributed at the door, there was the prospect of an agreeable variety in the proceedings, which was amply fulfilled. At intervals throughout the evening hymns, chants, and anthems were sung, the audience for the most part joining the choir. All heartily joined in the opening Old Hundredth, after which the Rev. Joshua Harrison offered prayer, and there was more singing. Then Mr. Hugh Mason, of Ashton-under-Lyne, was called to the chair, and the meeting settled down to the business of the evening.

The CHAIRMAN, in a brief and judicious speech, expressed his sense of the moral courage of the committee in choosing so radical a president for the evening—one who at home was so intimately connected both with the local Liberation Society and Nonconformist Committee—both of which references elicited loud applause. Not all connected with the Union embraced such advanced views, but in that body there was great latitude of opinion without any element of discord. For himself he rejoiced in the decision of the Monday night's meeting on the education question. (Cheers.) He eulogised the services of Dr. H. Allon and Mr. Dale in their literary labours—the former in the *British Quarterly Review*, and the latter in the *Congregationalist*; and, in closing, Mr. Mason protested against the calumny of Dean Stanley, who,

in a sermon preached on Ascension Day in Westminster Abbey, said that Nonconformists thought more of their sectarianism than their religion. He hoped and felt assured, though he knew they were passing through a time of very warm conflict, that the end of their conflict would be the outcome of great principles such as he believed the Nonconformists had advocated for generations past. The chairman sat down amid cordial applause. After another service of song.

The Rev. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A., delivered an address on "Olden Nonconformity," which was not so much an historical sketch as an endeavour to estimate the social and moral influence of the Puritans upon the life of the nation. He drew a vivid picture of the grand old Nonconformists of the Elizabethan era, and in the reign of James I. and Charles II.—of their loyalty to the Crown, while steadfastly adhering to their own convictions, in the reign of Queen Bess, "the most masterly woman" who ever sat on a throne, and their patriotic self-denial in later times. The Protectorate, which they were instrumental in founding, was the grandest attempt at Christian government ever made in the history of man. Though it was swept away, the influence of the Puritans survived. It was a great mistake to suppose that the foul flood of intolerance, licence, and corruption, which returned with sevenfold malignity on the restoration of Charles II., leavened the whole population. The Puritan element remained at work, especially in the middle classes of society, whom it moulded into a moral and God-fearing community. The Puritans were no political dreamers, but religious, resolute business men, who were loth to become separatists, and who sought to remove scandals without revolution—sad and stern as the result of their position but gentle and tolerant; their homes models of purity and the domestic affections. Their alleged moroseness was, to some extent, a libel. They could indulge in cheerful mirth and recreation, as was shown from Dr. Halley's "History of Nonconformity in Lancashire." Their Calvinism was then a wholesome necessity, though its day may now be over. It drove them to reliance on God. If they had been tolerated and listened to, we might never have heard of Nonconformity, and the Stuarts might still be sitting on the throne. Still the Puritans were the back-bone of the nation. In eloquent language Mr. Brown described their patience under obloquy, their practical good sense combined with religious enthusiasm, their simple faith and heroic endurance, their service to England in resisting both Prelacy and Popery, and the great part they played in preserving the morals and in elevating the morale of the country. These noble qualities were wrought into the national life, and are the basis of our national character, giving us the moral supremacy we enjoy, and will probably survive for generations to come. We cannot pretend in this bare outline to do justice to the speaker's forcible statement of this position, or to his thoughtful and often striking and sparkling reflections and illustrations. Many passages of Mr. Brown's address, which was listened to with unflinching attention, were warmly applauded, and he sat down amid much cheering.

To re-enlist the interest of the audience immediately after Mr. Brown's brilliant address was a task of no ordinary difficulty. This task, however, the Rev. A. Thomson, M.A., of Manchester, the next speaker fully, accomplished. Mr. Thomson began his address by referring to that divine law of progress by which all great movements, like the deepening and widening river, gather depth, and breadth, and volume as they advance. This law, he said, both explained the points of difference between the "olden Nonconformity" and the Nonconformity of the present day, and was at the same time strikingly illustrated by those differences. In accordance with its action "modern Nonconformity" had advanced towards a firmer grasp and a wider and more thorough application of the principles of the older Nonconformists than those great and good men themselves had been prepared for. It was thus that the separation of the religious from the secular institutions of the nation, which many of them had merely accepted as a painful necessity, was now clearly seen to be demanded by the first principles of religion on the one hand and of righteous civil government on the other. This principle which they had timidly and hesitatingly applied to strictly ecclesiastical establishments, was now boldly and confidently applied to educational and other institutions touching upon the province of religion and conscience. He was not prepared to say whether, as compared with the growth of the population, Nonconformists had recently made any great advance in mere numbers,

but as regards the weight of their influence in all social and political affairs, that advance was great and obvious. Defections from their ranks amongst those who attained to the high places of mere worldly prosperity and advantage were frequent and natural. Nonconformity, like the mountain pine, flourishes well on the bleak open plain: transplant it to a warmer clime and it languishes; remove it to the hothouse, and it immediately dies. But if Nonconformity had in this way lost the adherence of some of those who had ceased to be in sympathy with its earnest spirit and mission, it had gained infinitely more in the extent to which its principles had permeated the great mass of the middle classes of society. Looking towards the future, he saw prospects of still more rapid and decided progress. Amongst the working-classes in our colonies, in heathen lands, fields of high service and usefulness were opening up before them. In view of those prospects it became them earnestly to ask, "What manner of men ought we to be?" It would be in vain to maintain their Nonconformity to the church if they yielded to a spirit of conformity to the world. Let them emulate the thoughtful, earnest, godly spirit of their forefathers, and thus transmit unimpaired to their posterity the godly inheritance which they had received from their predecessors.

Mr. Thomson concluded his address amid the loud and hearty cheers of the audience. Afterwards several pieces were sung by the choir, cordial thanks were voted to them for their effective service, to the chairman and the speakers—though there was a single dissentient, "one Nonconformist in the assembly," remarked Mr. Hannay with ready wit—and then the large audience slowly dispersed, evidently highly gratified by the engagements of the evening.

#### FRIDAY'S SESSION OF THE UNION.

The adjourned meeting was held at the Poultry Chapel on Friday, the Rev. J. Kennedy, D.D., presiding. There was a large attendance.

#### THE BRITISH FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY (LIMITED).

The Rev. J. C. GALLAWAY made a statement as to the guarantee fund for the formation of an insurance company, to be called the British Fire Insurance Company (Limited). This time last year the committee were engaged in trying to raise a guarantee fund, for the purpose, of 20,000. In the autumn that sum was guaranteed, and on the advice of counsel it was decided to form a limited liability company in order to ensure a permanent constituency and throw it open to the whole denomination. It had now been decided to call for a fund of 100,000, or a capital of 100,000, in 20,000 shares at 5s. each, the issue to commence with 10,000 shares, on which 10s. would be payable on allotment. The prospectus had been agreed upon, and the articles canvassed, and the directorate had been filled up to the extent of nine, including Mr. J. Crossley, Halifax; Mr. T. Salt, Bradford; Mr. J. Spencer, Manchester; Mr. F. Bidgood, London; Mr. R. Sinclair, London; Mr. Allott, Sheffield; Mr. Frean, London; and Mr. Cootes, St. Ives, and it was thought desirable to add four or five more London gentlemen. It was proposed to insure all churches and church property, which were valued at between five and six millions, and to take in private houses and their contents as well, so that it might be as wide as possible. If the denomination would take this matter up a large fund would be gained for denominational purposes. It would be altogether a benevolent fund, and the shareholders would only be entitled to five per cent., the remainder of the profits to go in aid of building chapels and schools, colleges, mission-houses, and all institutions for congregational purposes, and also in aid of the repair and improvement of the same. It was believed a scheme of this kind would be very successful, and that future years would reap the fruit. (Hear, hear.)

#### THE BICENTENARY MEMORIAL HALL.

The Rev. J. H. WILSON read a brief historical account of this hall (the foundation stone of which was to be laid in the afternoon). The hall was intended to commemorate the ejection of the 2,000 ministers from the Church on the 24th of August, 1662, and it was resolved in October, 1861, that such a memorial should be built. Subsequently to that conferences were held in London, and steps were taken to raise a fund for the memorial and other purposes. Soon it was reported that 250,000 had been promised. The trustees of the Congregational Library in London accepted the responsibility of carrying out the hall, and after more than one negotiation for other sites a site had been found in Farringdon-street, on part of the site of the old Fleet Prison.

#### THE STANDING ORDERS.

The meeting then proceeded to discuss the "standing orders." First, with reference to the meetings it was resolved, that the annual meeting should be held on Monday and Tuesday after the first Wednesday in May, and on the following Friday; that the autumnal meeting should be held at a time and place fixed by the committee. Resolutions referring to the conduct of the meetings

were passed after some discussion; the annual subscriptions were declared payable in advance on January each year; and any church society or college failing to pay its subscription for two years in succession was declared incompetent to elect delegates. New standing orders relating to the election of chairman of the Union were also carried after some discussion.

#### MISSION TO THE SCOTCH CHURCHES.

The Rev. ANDREW REED, B.A., gave an account of his visit to the Scotch churches as the representative of the Union. He said the enthusiasm and success of the meetings in Scotland this year were certainly not exceeded by any previous meetings. He had not time to narrate the details of all the breakfasts, morning sessions, evening conversations and soirees, &c., which filled up the week. The subjects which came under discussion were the proposals to change the character of the union from a sort of home missionary society to a society embracing wider questions of general interest; and also the question of education. He had the opportunity of meeting the churches in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and St. Andrew's. He had heard Scotch Congregationalism spoken of as feeble, but he returned with the conviction that it was rapidly growing in pecuniary resources, numerically, and in spiritual power, and that it was taking an important place amongst the churches in Scotland. (Hear, hear.) As to the general aspect of religion in Scotland there was a tendency in the higher classes towards Episcopacy, either of the Broad or the High Church type, and this was much lamented. He thought that Dean Stanley's visit to Scotland had done no harm, but had rather checked the tendency to which he alluded. The union of a portion of the Free Church with the United Presbyterians had drawn forth uncompromising hostility; and the disestablishment policy was becoming more clear and unwavering. There was a strong conviction that the change in Ireland, both in the Presbyterian and Episcopalian Churches, was working well, and that those churches had gained more than they had lost by the transition. He felt that changes were at hand in Scotland; and he hoped the union would continue the practice of sending delegates there. (Hear, hear.)

#### COUNCILS OF REFERENCE.

The Rev. Dr. MULLENS then read a paper on "Councils of Reference." Having excused himself, who had never been a pastor of an English church, for venturing to offer an opinion on an institution which it was proposed to introduce amongst the churches, he said the subject was brought under his notice twenty years ago in connection with religious life in the United States. The earliest Congregational churches in England and Ireland, when they went under the name of Separatists, though contending that each society was complete in itself, regarded each society as related to all others. In Ireland this was carried into practical effect by councils in public matters and disputes. Down to the present century, however, English Congregationalism, owing to bitter persecutions, had not had fair play, but it did not altogether prevent union. Meanwhile the New England brethren escaped from bondage, and nothing interfered with their principles being freely carried out. In the cabin of the Mayflower the covenant was made which regulated the civil and church legislation, which became so interwoven, and formed the basis of the great American federation. Kind feeling for each other as a Christian duty continued to govern the settlers in their new homes, and could never be repressed by persecuting influences. This developed itself in two ways: first, by a system of councils of advice, and secondly, by the association of ministers with each other. These councils had become great institutions in America, and in respect to the common interest of the churches, had done great service. They had long formed an integral element in the church system and in the daily life of the churches. He rested these statements on the highest authority he could quote, viz., Dr. Dexter, who argued that whilst every church was independent of outward control, yet fraternal fellowship was to be maintained when insoluble difficulties arose in important matters, as when pastors had to be settled or dismissed and when the church had to adopt its creed. In such matters counsel was to be sought of other churches, but it was not in any case to exceed fraternal suasion. Congregationalism differed from Independency, Dr. Dexter said, by its recognition of this practical fellowship between the churches. The holding of these councils was an essential element in the New England Congregationalism. Dr. Dexter discussed these questions: Who may call a council? How shall it be summoned? What shall be the form of the letters missive? The organisation of the council, its scope of inquiry, method of procedure, &c.; the mode of its commencement, and its own dissolution. There were also in America permanent councils, called Consociations, but in Massachusetts they were not liked, and various writers on them said they offered no advantages sufficient to compensate for the dangers they involved. In New England the councils were only temporary. The question had been discussed in England whether it was desirable to make a change and adopt this system of councils. Of course, fears had been expressed lest great principles should be laid aside, and the true independence of the churches endangered. Such observations were, of course, entitled to respect, but it was a common thing to prophesy loss and danger through any change. (Hear, hear.) The experience of other churches was surely a sufficient

answer to such objections, when they saw liberty completely secured, whilst the advantages of brotherly co-operation had been multiplied. Councils of advice met a particular want in a class of cases for which isolation did not provide. Were not appeals now frequently made to individuals? Were not disputes in trade matters often referred to councils of conciliation? Why then should not the churches adopt them? Did not Christian men acknowledge that their own conduct affected others, and that their own prosperity influenced others? If so, the formation of friendly tribunals to whose judgment great respect would be shown, would seem to follow as a matter of course. He should not propose that the American system should be transferred to this country just as it now existed; but at all events they could adopt the principle and carry it out in an English fashion. (Hear, hear.) If the principle was admitted, details could be soon arranged. Assuming the principle to be accepted, they had agencies and arrangements at hand for carrying it out. First, he would suggest that instead of the word "council" the word "committee" should be adopted; and these committees might be called "committees of advice." Secondly, they need only attach such a committee to each county union, and thus enlarge the aids already so numerous and useful; and this arrangement would soon appear to be perfectly natural. The committees need not be permanent; but at the commencement both permanent and temporary committees might be tried. The Hampshire Union in their recent session had adopted a plan perfectly English, and which reminded him of the jury lists. Action should only be taken on the requisition of the churches concerned in the matter; the advice to be given should be confined to the matter named in the requisition, or "letters missive," and the responsibility of accepting or rejecting the advice should rest on the Church by whom the advice was sought. The West Riding Union had adopted much the same plan, but had added a rule that both parties should be bound to act on the advice given. He believed that if councils or committees of this kind were formed, they would remove many of the irregularities and scandals which had hitherto given so much pain. Dr. Mullens concluded by proposing a resolution to the effect that the Union was of opinion that in weighty matters of common concern, especially in cases of discord, in the founding of new churches, in the settlement and removal of pastors, and in all cases in which light and counsel are requisite, it would conduce to good order, and be a public benefit, if the Congregational churches should make it a practice to seek assistance from each other more formal and frequent than they had been accustomed to do hitherto; but they considered that in continuing to act on the method of co-operation adopted by the first founders of Congregationalism, the New England churches had enjoyed much peace, and had been most helpful to one another; and that they rejoiced to hear that several county unions had taken action in this matter, and trusted such action would be of great service to the churches, and ere long would be imitated by all the unions throughout the country.

The Rev. Dr. ALLON seconded the resolution. He considered this was a matter of vital importance. When he was in the States he got some "coaching" on the subject, and the conclusion he came to was that there was not a recorded case in which the councils of reference had been hurtful in any sense which the most rigid Independent would resent. (Hear, hear.) The evils to be remedied by such councils were the irregular way in which new churches now originated, the painful way in which ordination services were used, and the scandals arising out of church quarrels. The remedy must in each case rest upon moral force and influence. Of a law in any other sense they knew nothing. The great principle on which the councils were based was that among the churches there was a fellowship; and a good deal more than mere kindly feeling was necessary. Frequently common and concerted action was desirable and necessary. At present there was no remedy against the selfishness of large churches, or the misery of small ones. If they could establish relations between the churches, they would all feel they had done not only a Christian thing, but something that would be a powerful help to church life. A council would not be an arbitration binding on the parties at issue. He hardly liked to go so far as to recommend permanent councils. He should prefer a temporary council, which, when it had given a decision, should be defunct. Having spoken of the various ways in which councils could be used with good effect, Dr. Allon said that he saw nothing in them which would imperil the strictest Independency; but he saw in them the elements of a great deal of good. He thought that in order to throw some further light upon the constitution and action of the councils of reference, it would be desirable to appoint a small committee to prepare suggestions upon which country unions and other bodies might act, and to bring out whatever light could be furnished by the example of America. (Hear, hear.)

The Rev. THOMAS JAMES said that, though in feeble health, being deeply interested in this subject, he had determined to make an effort to be present. (Hear, hear.) He had always been deeply interested in the action of America in this matter; and from circumstances that had come under his own notice he had determined to use his best endeavours to get councils of advice adopted when any difficulty occurred. In some cases of

which he knew, the council of advice had been successful, but not in others. It was a matter of thankfulness, however, that with 2,000 churches occasions for strife very seldom arose. He thought the matter might be referred to the general committee of the Union, with instructions to prepare some document on the subject, and communicate with the associations throughout the country, and through them with the various churches.

The Rev. JOSEPH SHAW (Battersea) stated that the congregation at Boston had the honour of first adopting the principle of a council of reference before Hampshire and the West Riding. He thought the word "council" better than the word "committee," as it would be more distinctive of its functions. He was connected with a church in London which had passed through many trials, which he was quite sure might have been escaped had there been such an institution as a council of reference in existence.

The Rev. R. H. NOBLE (Tiverton) stated that several years ago a movement of this kind was initiated in Devonshire, and a council was formed, called a "committee of counsel," appointed annually, and formed equally of ministers and laymen, its authority being of a moral character only. No evil had resulted from it; but, on the contrary, a vast amount of good.

Mr. J. HILL, of Worcester, related a case in which a committee of the County Union was appealed to to settle what appeared to be a hopeless feud between a pastor and his congregation, and the recommendations of the committee were accepted on each side, and the dispute settled amicably.

The Rev. W. M. STATHAM, of Hull, said it was very natural to suppose the weak churches would consult the strong; but was it quite so clear the great churches would ask counsel of the others in the question of settlement of their ministers?

The Rev. Dr. ALLON explained that the resolution simply referred to the sanction of the churches to the ordination of ministers; and if any part of the council assembled did not sanction the ordination, they would simply retire and decline further responsibility in the matter.

The Rev. W. STATHAM pointed out that the resolution distinctly spoke of the "settlement" of ministers. However, he thought the subject required more time to debate than could be given to it at that meeting, because there were several points in the resolution touching the vital points of Independency. The smaller churches, it should be remembered, prided themselves upon nothing so much as their Independency, and were willing to submit to many evils rather than have their independent position touched.

The Rev. Dr. ALLON said it was thought desirable that the resolution should be as general as possible; and it was only intended as an expression of feeling rather than as a course of policy. In place of the word "assistance," it would perhaps be better to say "advice."

The Rev. SAMUEL M'ALL (Hackney College) asked what would be the effect in case a minister was invited from one sphere to another, and the council of one church said he should go and the council of the other church said he should not be accepted? (Laughter.) He thought it would be better to omit from the resolution all reference to the pastoral connection.

The Rev. S. PARKINSON (Croydon) said that in his union the members had not seen their way to the adoption of a council of reference. In regard to the objects of the council, he thought the question of the settlement of ministers ought to be put on a different footing from the rest, as he supposed a great many young men, who would not object to give evidence of their moral character, would object to have their theological creed pronounced upon by a council of reference who might amongst themselves differ as to what was orthodox.

The Rev. JOSEPH FLETCHER (Christchurch) suggested that the entire subject had better be remitted to the committee, to be brought up again at the autumnal meeting, without at present expressing any decided opinion one way or the other. In reference to the council founded in Hampshire, he did not think it was contemplated to pass judgment on the theological opinions or to interfere with the settlement of pastors; but it was thought that in cases of dispute between pastor and congregation there would be a tribunal to go to where reconciliation might be effected. The whole subject wanted ventilation, and he trusted Dr. Mullens and Dr. Allon would allow the whole matter to be remitted to the council and brought up again in the autumn.

The Rev. Dr. ALLON said he believed the resolution to be perfectly harmless. (Laughter.) The object must be to create a moral feeling in the churches, so that if any man acted in defiance of the recommendations of the council he would have a hopeless time of it.

The Rev. A. HANNAY (secretary) said he was unwilling to have all the supposed harm taken out of the resolution. However, the question of the settlement of ministers must be disposed of before they could give any judgment on the expediency of councils, and that subject could not be thoroughly discussed that morning. He therefore thought it would be best to adopt the suggestion of Mr. Fletcher.

The Rev. Dr. ALLON said he should have no objection to have the matter postponed.

Mr. C. REED, M.P., thought it would be the wisest course to let the matter go to the autumnal meeting—(Hear, hear)—as it affected the brethren in the country more than those in London.

After some further brief discussion, it was agreed to postpone the consideration of the subject to the autumnal meeting, the resolution being as follows:

That the subject of councils of reference be recommended, and that the committee be instructed to make arrangements for re-introduction at the autumnal meeting.

Some formal resolutions of thanks to the readers of the papers during the meetings, to the Rev. Dr. Parker for the use of the Poultry Chapel, and to the Rev. Dr. Kennedy for his inaugural address and for his kind and courteous bearing in presiding over the meetings of the Union, were then passed, after which the chairman pronounced the benediction, and the session terminated.

## CONGREGATIONAL MEMORIAL HALL AND LIBRARY.

### LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION-STONE.

The foundation-stone of this building, in Farringdon-street, was laid on Friday afternoon last. The enclosure fitted up for the reception of spectators was crowded in every part, the number of ladies present being very large. Amongst other occupants of the platform were Mr. J. Remington Mills, Mr. S. Morley, M.P., Mr. C. Reed, M.P., Mr. Lea, M.P., Mr. Charles Gilpin, M.P., the Rev. Dr. Halley, the Rev. T. Binney, Dr. Allon, Professor Hoppus, Mr. John Crossley, Mr. James Spicer, the Rev. J. H. Wilson, the Rev. Alexander Hannay, Mr. Edward Grimwade, Mr. J. C. Williams, Dr. Waddington, the Rev. Dr. Kennedy, the Rev. David Thomas, Mr. T. R. Hill, &c.

The proceedings commenced by the hymn, "Shine, mighty God, on Britain shine," being sung by all present. Mr. J. R. Mills then with the usual formalities laid the memorial stone, in which was deposited a bottle containing a copy of the following journals: *Times*, *Daily News*, *Nonconformist*, *English Independent*, *Builder*; as also English coins of the present year.

Mr. MILLS then addressed the meeting, congratulating all present on having met together on that interesting occasion. They would recollect it was more than ten years ago since the meeting was held for the purpose of commencing the work they had just inaugurated, and during that time he could assure them no pains had been spared to accomplish the object. In one respect their best efforts failed: he referred to the abortive attempt to purchase a site in New Earl-street—but that was not through any fault on their part; and they might now consider that failure as fortunate, inasmuch as the site they were now on was far more suitable to their object. He considered the proceedings had been governed by a Divine providence. The building was likely to answer every purpose for which it was intended; of course they did not aim at absolute perfection. It was a matter of great gratitude to God that at the present time men were able to obey their own consciences; and this was in a great measure owing to the labours and sufferings of those whose memory that hall would commemorate. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. THOMAS BINNEY then offered prayer. After a brief pause, it was announced that, as a photograph was to be taken of the company, it was desirable that all should quietly keep their place for a short time. About five minutes sufficed for that purpose.

The Rev. Dr. HALLEY, Principal of New College, then proceeded to deliver an address bearing on the object they were met to promote. He commenced by paying a tribute of respect to the memory of the late Dr. Vaughan, who, more than any other of their ministers had devoted himself with his strong intellect and ceaseless energy to the accomplishment of the great work they were engaged upon. (Cheers.) Had Dr. Vaughan been living he would have undoubtedly filled the speaker's place on that occasion, which he had a mournful pleasure in occupying. Dr. Vaughan and he had been much associated together in the ministry in London and Manchester, and although they differed on some important questions, and, on two or three occasions took opposite sides before the public; yet they were one in cordial attachment to the old Nonconformity with its conscientious fidelity, its primitive simplicity, and its evangelical doctrine. (Loud cheers.) Of the living promoters of the work, some were present whose generosity would not be forgotten. One was absent through indisposition (Mr. Joshua Wilson), who liberally provided the collection of books which would furnish the shelves of their capacious libraries. The hall was to be called "Memorial," because by it would be commemorated the fealty paid to conscience and the service done to true religion by the ministers who, at the cost of the livings and earthly prospects, refused to comply with the oppressive conditions of the Act of Uniformity. Ejected from their churches, they preached where they could, in all sorts of places, in season and out of season, after church hours on Sunday, and, as they grew bolder, during church hours; enduring persecution with meekness and boldness. By their labours and sufferings they had founded that Protestant Nonconformity which had done more than anything else to promote our religious liberties and civil freedom. (Cheers.) Had it not been for their Nonconformity what might have occurred in 1688, instead of the glorious Revolution, or in 1714 instead of the accession of the House of Brunswick? (Loud cheers.) Who, but for the various influences of that Nonconformity, direct and indirect, might that day have worn the crown and swayed the sceptre of their illustrious lady Queen Victoria. (Great applause.) Or what might now have been the state of Puritan America had there been no

Nonconforming enterprise to found its colonies, freedom to mould its institutions, or piety to teach its vast population? Might God grant that blood might never be shed by two nations so associated in such sacred bonds of union and peace! (Continued applause.) The best memorial of the ejected ministers was to be seen in their works, which remained to be studied in every page of English history of the last two centuries; but it was wished to have a more distinct and visible memorial. The old meeting-houses, with their severe and puritanical style of architecture, lofty pulpits, and heavy galleries, would soon become antiquities. A building would be erected serviceable to themselves, and to those who might succeed them, in maintaining and promulgating the great principles for which their forefathers suffered—primarily for the sake of the principles, not of the people who held them. A complete Nonconformist library was wanted, as was also assistance and encouragement for Nonconformist literature, offices for Nonconformist societies, and a commodious hall for Nonconformist assemblies—a home for Nonconformist principles. (Cheers.) That want would be supplied in a manner and form commemorative of the men who worked and suffered for the great principles to the promotion of which the building would be dedicated. But it would not be a memorial in the sense of the Albert and Scott memorials. As an illustration he would say they might raise a mighty tower, and on every side exhibit statues of the more distinguished ministers in appropriate positions—Gouge, facing St. Sepulchre's; Dr. Jacob, St. Martin's, Ludgate; White, St. Andrew's, Holborn; and Richard Baxter, who, not then having a benefice, preached his farewell sermon in St. Ann's, Blackfriars; and near them all the more distinguished ministers, both metropolitan and country, looking towards their respective churches. They would include the two grandfathers of John Wesley; and he should like to ask what good John Wesley would ever have done if it was not for his two ejected grandfathers? (Loud cheers.) Wales might have a pinnacle of her own, but he must ask some one whose vocal organs could express the euphony and sweetness of her gutturals and double consonants to pronounce the proper names of her persecuted Nonconformists. (Loud laughter and cheers.) But as they did not contemplate the erection of any such memorial tower, let him notice what they did propose. Useful service was their primary object, while secondary and subordinate to it they proposed in a commemorative form to express their regret and veneration for the ejected ministers. "She hath done what she could," said our Lord of Mary of Bethany. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." (Applause.) The Gospel was not to be preached throughout the whole world in honour of Mary; yet wherever it was preached for the salvation of sinners, it secured a memorial of her good deeds—a secondary object, indeed very secondary and subordinate, but still not unworthy the express assurance of our blessed Lord, who condescended to promise an everlasting and universal memorial of her acceptable services. Might he not adduce the authority of their Lord to justify them in accomplishing a beneficent object in a manner which would commemorate that which the ejected ministers had done? (Applause.) In the library no useful book relating to Nonconformity, its history, its principles, ought to be wanting. The Congregational Lecture, so well-known in former days, would be resumed, and, it was to be hoped, would stimulate their more thoughtful young ministers to pursue with ardour their Biblical and theological studies. He would also like to see the history of Nonconformity more studied, and the Nonconformist history of every county in a prominent place on the shelves of their library. Against all ritualistic devotion, all sacerdotal mediation, all sacramental efficacy, they intended in that Puritan hall to bear a calm and decisive testimony in the spirit of the departed ministers whose history taught that simple forms of worship promoted fervent devotion and practical religion. What ritual could have made Baxter more earnest, Owen more spiritual, Howe more heavenly, Flavel more pathetic, Isaac Melrose more devout, Oliver Heywood more laborious, or Philip Henry more sweetly and lovingly Christian? ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) The speaker concluded—"Conscious of cordial approval of their doctrine, as well as loving admiration of their example, I feel it a great honour, nearly at the close of a somewhat protracted life, spent in serving, however feebly and imperfectly, but honestly and simply—(loud cheers)—the cause for which they laboured so hard and suffered so much, to act with many friends who are raising a memorial of their worth, a home for their principles, a library for their literature, an encouragement to their admirers, and a means, in connection with their honour of promoting the cause so dear to them—of rational, free, honest, unadorned, evangelical Nonconformity." (Loud cheering.)

The Rev. Dr. KENNEDY moved the following resolution:—

That this meeting cannot separate without acknowledging with devout gratitude the goodness of God, as seen in the blessing with which He has thus far been pleased to crown this undertaking; and would, at the same time, solemnly recognise the fidelity to conscience which the erection of this hall and library is intended to commemorate, as an element of vital importance in the subsequent history of that civil and religious freedom which we now enjoy.

In the course of his succeeding remarks he said:

That fidelity to conscience of which this resolution speaks with great fitness, has an element of much importance in the subsequent history of the civil and religious freedom of this country. What element of national strength and well-being is to be compared with fidelity to conscience? (Cheers.) We honour the fidelity to conscience of many men who, 200 years ago, differed from the work of suffering that we commemorate to-day. We honour the fidelity to conscience of those who differ from us, and I am sure we feel that it would be ill for England if we only had the product of fidelity in one part of the community. Our Parliament is strong in the end, whatever may be its differences, because on both sides of the House, if I may use that expression here, whatever else there is, there is much more of fidelity to conscience. Let any country have its questions, its quarrellings determined by the strength of passion or by the strength of arms, and the result cannot be satisfactory. (Hear, hear.) An enlightened conscience may do much havoc, and may occasion great temporary wrong to individuals or classes, but give me an unenlightened conscience far sooner than a spirit of mere tyranny or of mere passion in the conduct of human affairs. (Cheers.)

Mr. SAMUEL MORLEY, M.P., being loudly called for said he had not intended to address the assembly, but at all events he would second the resolution. To him individually the value which attached to the building they were about to erect lay in the direction of service. He regarded the building as the embodiment, so far as the material structure was concerned, of the work they had to do, and he believed they had work to do. He hoped that in that building, when erected, many of their wisest and most earnest men would meet, not only to consider how they could best give their testimony, but how they could best work for the good of the people amongst whom they were living. (Hear, hear.) There never was a time at which there was greater need for earnest service than at the present moment. He hoped to see a large impetus given to the spirit of serious effort which he believed attached especially to the Nonconformist bodies of this country. (Cheers.)

Mr. JOHN CROSSLEY, in supporting the resolution, expressed a hope that the building would be speedily completed, in order that it might serve the ends which they all so greatly desired, and which had been so ably set forth by Dr. Halley.

Mr. CHARLES REED, M.P., hailed the inauguration of that memorial stone as marking the place where their young men, meeting with their friends, could be taught to hold their distinctive principles. He hoped, amongst the plans of the committee, there would be some arrangement made for the gathering of young men to learn from the veterans in the service, for he feared that year by year many of their youth were losing their regard for the truths for holding which their predecessors had suffered. (Cheers.)

The resolution was passed unanimously.

A letter, expressing regret at his inability to be present, was then read from Mr. George Hadfield, M.P., in which, after expressing regret for inability to be present, the writer congratulated the friends of the Memorial Hall in having overcome all difficulties, and in having fairly launched this enterprise. They were fortunate indeed in having the help and supervision of the honoured chairman, not only for his munificent liberality, but for the skill and patience which he had shown for years, until they had reached the stage which was to be that day consummated. They believed that not only themselves, but unborn generations would be blessed in that good work.

The following resolution was proposed by the Mr. ALFRED ROOKER, seconded by the Rev. DAVID THOMAS, and carried unanimously:—

That the best thanks of this meeting are due to John Remington Mills, Esq., chairman and treasurer, and the other members of the committee, for the deep and practical interest they have shown in the management of the Memorial Hall fund.

The proceedings concluded by the company singing the National Anthem.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING.

The following are some particulars relative to the building when finished. The style will be gothic of the early decorated period:—

The building will contain seven offices, including board rooms and committee rooms, to be used by the various societies in connection with the denomination; a library, 58 ft. by 45 ft., with gallery; a hall for meetings, &c., 87 ft. by 45 ft., which will also be used for public worship, and, with galleries, will accommodate about 1500 persons; a spacious entrance-hall and staircase, with lobbies, from Farringdon-street; a commodious entrance and staircase at the back from Fleet-lane.

Ample provision will be made for lavatories and other conveniences. There will also be apartments for the hall-keeper. The library, hall, staircase, and passages will be constructed on fire-proof principles, and the whole of the basement will be vaulted with brick arches, forming extensive warerooms and cellars, with entrances entirely separate from the other entrances to the premises. The principal front, which will face Farringdon-street, will be very lofty and conspicuous; the centre gable will be 120 feet high to top of finials, and the south-west tower 160 feet high to top of iron cresting.

The outside of the walls above the plinth will be built with Devonshire limestone in drop courses, the plinth in Aberdeen grey granite, surmounted by a bold moulding in red granite. The jambs, mullions, &c., of the doors and windows will be executed in Portland stone, and the whole of the joiners' work in pitch pine.

The builders are Messrs. Jackson and Shaw, whose tender, amounting to 27,858*l.*, was accepted for the erection of the building.

The architects are Messrs. John Tarring and Son, 69, Basinghall-street, London, E.C.

The area of freehold ground purchased is 9,000*ft.* at a cost of 28,000*l.*; and, if all promised subscriptions are paid up and a few additional contributions obtained, the committee are hopeful that the new hall will be opened free of debt.

#### THE OLDEN NONCONFORMITY.

We have given elsewhere a brief outline of the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown's paper on this subject at the Cannon-street Hotel on Friday evening. Subjoined are a few extracts from the address itself, which has subsequently reached us.

#### THE ANGLICAN ESTABLISHMENT.

Our English Nonconformity has in all ages, and under all conditions, one simple test—the impossibility of believing that the English establishment of religion is anything even faintly like the institution which Christ meant to establish when He set up His visible kingdom in the world. The English Establishment stands by itself. There is nothing like it on the face of the earth; nothing like it in some of its nobler features and forces; nothing like it, thank God, in its baser. It was a Church made for the people by their rulers, and after no pattern shown to them in the Mount—(Hear, hear)—but it was made—and this is a strong side of it, and has rooted it so deeply in the very structure of English society—it was made after a constitutional fashion the three estates of the realm, the Commons, with the Lords spiritual and temporal, combining in constitutional order to establish it, placing it under the earthly headship of the monarch, and securing to themselves the supreme authority over it to the end of its days, which is coming soon. (Laughter.) It is the creature of the State as no other Church is the creature of the State; but let us not be blind to the fact that this has conferred on it a national character, and mixed it up in all the movements of our national life, in a way which has been fraught with the most important consequences both to the Church, the nation, and to those who have carried on their spiritual work outside her pale. The Church of England has been from the first a profoundly political institution. (Cheers.) It has mixed itself up with all the interests and activities of our political life. And so far well. If there is to be an Establishment, I am free to confess that I would desire a thorough Establishment, an Establishment founded, guided, governed, as ours has been by the constitutional authority in the State. Medieval Churchmen would look with dire horror, could they rise again, at the kind of thing which an English Parliament can create and baptise as a Christian Church. To them the Church is essentially a self-existent, self-governing community, teacher of all political communities, ruler of all political communities, but absolutely incapable, without forfeiting the very name of Church, of accepting from political communities its doctrines, discipline, and the law of its life. Do not think, I pray you, that the Anglican Establishment, to which our fathers were ready to die rather than conform, was simply the old Medieval Church with a Royal instead of a Papal head. The whole thing was set in an entirely new key. The constituted political authorities in the State took in charge the establishment and management of the truth and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus in this English land. We may grieve, as would Medieval Churchmen, as do modern High Churchmen, over the degradation of Christian ideas and of the Christian spirit involved in the very existence of such a worldly, rich, pompous, prelatical, Erastian institution as this. But its special character has had one good result. It has kept it alive. I mean alive with the life of the nation. It has kept up a free circulation of the juices of its national life in its limbs and organs, and presents it at this day, in point of vitality, in very favourable contrast to the Churches in Europe, which, born at the same time, were not welded in, so to speak, as ours has been with their national political life. Much as I sadden over the miseries and the wrongs of which the English Establishment has been the parent, I can conceive of something still worse, far worse, for England: a powerful Church, highly endowed, and free to govern itself, and to press the yoke of spiritual tyranny on our English necks. From that the founders of our Establishment delivered us. They have given us a Latitudinarian Church, whose doctrine is just as elastic as the lay theological intellect, and whose discipline is a farce; but, bad as it is, it is better than the ecclesiastical tyranny which, had their army triumphed, the Scotch Presbyterian party would have crushed upon us in its room. You remember Bailler in the Westminster Assembly, on the debate on the elderships. "This is a point of high consequence, and upon no other we (the Presbyterians) expect so great difficulty, except alone Independency, wherewith we purpose not to meddle in haste, till it please God to advance our army, which we expect will much assist our arguments." We must take just views of history. There is one thing worse than an Erastian Establishment, and that is an Establishment in which priest—writ large or small—presbyter, or Pope is supreme. We have suffered enough at the hands of the Establishment, Christianity has suffered enough; but let us do it what justice we may. It has managed to maintain a tolerably healthy relation between the outward truth of Christianity and our political life.

To maintain a vital relation between the inner spirit of Christianity and our national progress, was a task committed to yet more sacred hands—the hands of the persecuted and despised Nonconformists. (Applause.)

#### THE PURITANS AND CALVINISM.

It is the fashion now to cry down their Calvinism. The party, without question, was strongly Calvinistic. I, for one, thank God that it was so. But there was room in the elder Nonconformity for the widest varieties of belief and culture. John Goodwin, perhaps the ablest thinker of the party, most in tune with modern ideas, was an Arminian, while some of their most illustrious leaders, notably Lord Brooke, were deeply tinged with the doctrines of the Platonic school. Still, as a party, they were Calvinists, strong, hard Calvinists, holding high doctrines of grace, and not afraid of using the Divine decrees as catapults to crush contumacious prelatical foes. This is a great subject, the Calvinism of the party of liberty and progress in that stormy and struggling time. Thank God! that Calvinism got hold on them, or rather they got hold through Calvinism on their election of God to a solemn and awful enterprise, and a hand grip on the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, which did not relax till the work was done. Those who groan over their Calvinism, and the narrow and bitter spirit which they say it nurses, must face this fact, that from the days of Bancroft, in the reign of King James, the Church of England lapsed rapidly into Arminian doctrine, while the men who fought out that tremendous battle of the Lord and won it, were Calvinist to the backbone. I need not say that there was singular unity of doctrine in the Elizabethan Church. Whitgift, bitterly as he hated the Puritans, shared their doctrinal convictions profoundly; he would, if he could, have forced the Lambeth articles on the Church. But, from the accession of King James there is a growing doctrinal divergence. The clergy grow Arminian and slavish; the Nonconformists grew more intensely Calvinistic, if possible, and free. I am speaking entirely of those—not glancing at Calvinism and Arminianism now. Arminianism inspired submission; Calvinism courage to endure and to overcome. It is a strong thing to say; but it seems as if Calvinism threw men on the living arm of the living God in heaven; while Arminianism threw men at the feet of their earthly God, the King. Is this too strong? Read Dr. Sibthorpe, "If princes command anything which subjects may not perform, because it is against the law of God, or of Nature, or impossible"; one would think that was an end of the matter; but, he adds, "yet subjects are bound to undergo the punishment without either resisting, railing, or reviling; and so to yield a passive obedience where they cannot yield an active one." Hear Dr. Manwaring, who maintains that "His Majesty is not bound to keep and observe the good laws and customs of the realm; and that his royal will and command in imposing loans, taxes, and other aids upon his people without common consent in Parliament, do thus far"—you will see it is tolerably far—"bind the consciences of the subjects of this kingdom that they cannot refuse the same without peril of eternal damnation." I know of no Calvinistic hymns that ran to this tune. I believe that those were days in which nothing but the sense of a personal call, a personal inspiration, would have borne men through the tremendous strain which the conflict imposed on them. That their Calvinistic belief afforded to them, and the world will honour Calvinism, while history is read, seeing that it could bear men triumphantly through such a work as that. I am speaking quite for myself. I honour and love the affirmations of Calvinism as much as I dread and hate its negations. In those days of narrow party division and furious party strife—and the party strifes of these days are as baby's play compared with them—the affirmations were the matters with which men had chiefly to do. They wanted to be sure that the Lord was with them, and they were not troubled by the question how far He might or might not be with their foes. They had the inspiration of the sense of His presence, and they wrought a marvellous deliverance for this nation, a deliverance of a character and fulness which could come forth only from a Divine spring. We in these days have to look wider afield, and to consider the aspects of the Divine dealings to enemies as well as friends, and to humanity at large. The day of Calvinism as a developed doctrinal system is over, its work in the world—a grand and glorious work—is done. The central affirmation of Calvinism—"I know thee by name, and thou hast found grace in My sight"; "Fear not, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; I will strengthen thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness"—will never grow old while the world endures. (Cheers.)

#### INFLUENCE OF THE ELDER NONCONFORMISTS ON THE NATIONAL CHARACTER.

There is yet one point on which a word must be said in closing—the influence which the elder Nonconformity exercised, not on the morals only, but on the morale of our country; and on the measure of elevation, of honesty, of purity, which characterises our domestic, social, and political life. There can be no question, the proofs are, alas! abundant and conclusive, that it was a foul world, as well as a tyrannous world, against which our fathers rose up in judgment. There can be no question—the proofs again are happily abundant and conclusive—that the victory of the Non-

conformists was the purification of the national life. The army of the Independents was a model of discipline, military and moral. Such an army the world had never seen before, has never seen since; and its triumph everywhere was the triumph of mercy over cruelty, gentleness over brutality, sobriety over drunkenness, and chastity over lust, and it breathed its spirit through society. The Commonwealth was the purest, the most sober, continent, self-respectful, self-governed, as well as God-fearing State which has ever existed in this world. Then came the flood of the Restoration. Impurity, blasphemy, obscenity, gambling, servility, treachery, bribery, everything against which the elder Nonconformists had witnessed and striven, and which they had put down in England as they had never been put down in this world, returned with sevenfold malignity, and took possession of the land. We speak of those days as days of unexampled licence, and talk as if all the fruits of the great struggle had been swept away by this new deluge of sin. It is a great mistake. The purity, the domestic fidelity, the domestic courtesy and grace, the culture, the dignity of the elder Nonconformity, lived on. It betook itself with the Nonconformists of the second exodus to quiet, godly country homes, and was nursed and cherished there by godly Nonconformist ministries, in tears, and pain as most noble things are cherished, until it had lent a tinge to the whole middle-class life of England, a tinge of domestic purity, of self-restraint, of dignity, of piety, which it bears to this day, and which God grant that it may bear while England endures. It is a dreary mistake to imagine that all the virtue, or even the most precious part of the virtue of the life of the Commonwealth was swept away by that French deluge of the Restoration. We read about the Court life of Charles II., and think that it is England. But what is the Court life to the country life of a nation? (Cheers.) It is as the coat to the man. Never mind the coat, see what kind of a man is beneath. And I say the reformation, for reformation it was, which the elder Nonconformists wrought, betook itself with the Nonconformists of 1662 to the wilderness. It left courts and camps, and sheltered itself in quiet country homes, in county halls and farmhouses, among the gentry, in upper rooms, in towns among the tradesmen, in peasants' cottages, and in misers' huts, and there it brought an element inestimably precious into our national life. It made the great Nonconformist party, from 1662 till our own day, the champion of order, cleanliness, sobriety, chastity, honesty, and liberty. Born in sorrow and nursed in affliction, it has not been afraid to suffer for England, and to win, by its own pain and sacrifice, liberties and advantages in whose blessing now the whole nation shares. It has taught monarchy limitation, it has taught the Government its responsibility; it has taught aristocracy its duty, and democracy its power. It has taught the State the law of Conservative progress; it has taught the Church charity and the voluntary principle: and it prays us now, with its worn, sad countenance, full of thorough noble endurance and conquering faith, to carry on and to complete with the same strength, and with the same high aim, the great enterprise of the Gospel—to make this earth a kingdom of heaven—unless we are prepared to declare ourselves, before God and man, unworthy of our noble traditions, our illustrious ancestry, our ever memorable and glorious history. (Loud and continued cheering.)

#### HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The fifty-third annual meeting of this society was held on Tuesday evening, May 7, in Poultry Chapel. There was a large attendance. The chair was taken by Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P. After devotional exercises, which were conducted by the Rev. J. Wilson, and the Rev. W. Cuthbertson,

The Rev. J. H. WILSON read the report of the society's proceedings for the past year, of which the following is an abstract. The society has sustained, or assisted in sustaining, an evangelistic and permanent agency, consisting of 130 home mission pastors, and 100 lay evangelists, who preached the Gospel and did other Christian work in more than 1,000 villages and hamlets; and they occupied 137 mission-stations, containing 694 chapels and mission-rooms, and had an average attendance of 45,000 hearers. This paid agency was ably supported by 266 voluntary lay preachers, 2,400 Sunday-school teachers and Christian visitors—who, with the evangelists, visited 44,700 families, distributed 250,000 tracts, sold 2,000 copies of the Scriptures, disposed of 110,000 periodicals; and more than 1,000 persons have been added to the fellowship of the churches. Great good had thus been accomplished. A few examples are then given from the journals of the society's agents of successful labour. An agent in Monmouthshire, who is working amongst a very dark mining population, says:—

Since the long evenings commenced I have entered on continuous and special services. We had six weeks of this kind, without intermission, and six weeks with partial rest. I thought that as the theatrical company paraded the streets by day, announcing their performances at night, and as the public-houses are open Sunday and Saturday, and often thronged, surely something ought to be done to induce sinners to seek for salvation. Hence these special services. They have been most successful. Not only have the meetings been largely attended, but such has been the impression produced, that the attendance at the chapel has increased from fifty to 350 persons, and many have been saved. In different parts of the country a great religious awakening has taken place.

A missionary in Somerset writes:—

The Divine blessing has attended our labours during the past year. Our lay preachers are employed on Sabbath-days, and often travel long distances to preach the Gospel. For a while we have been holding special services—about fifteen a week—some early in the morning, and some at night. Prayer has been heard, and nineteen souls have been added to the church. Our preaching stations have been all stirred, and I have had to get help from neighbouring ministers and evangelists.

An evangelist in Sussex reports:—

Since December, 1870, I have recorded over thirty hopeful conversions, from visitation and addresses in the open air, and at cottage meetings; but only twenty-two are received into the fellowship of the churches, the others being in the classes for inquirers in the meantime.

Though there are other accounts of an equally encouraging character, some of the agents complain that little apparent effect is produced by their labours. There is yet much heathenism in England, and reports published, as the result of official inquiries into the moral, social, and religious condition of England, are most appalling. The testimony of the Rev. J. C. Ryle, recently quoted in one of our Supplements, is then reproduced, and the testimony of one of the agents of the society referred to. He gives the particulars of fourteen villages in Warwickshire where there is little or no Gospel. The committee express regret that, in the midst of so much usefulness, and when the claims on the society are so strong, the regular incomes should be far short of the expenditure. No doubt this has arisen in some degree from the falling away of legacies, and from the fact that county associations are now reserving all their own funds for their own work—those funds having increased from 7,800*l.* in 1860, to 18,000*l.* in 1872, or since the Home Missionary Society was closely associated with them; but this great and encouraging increase is, to a large extent, dependent for its permanency on the Home Missionary Society being able to continue to give an additional third of this amount from its own resources; and the committee express their belief that this has only to be stated to enlist the practical sympathy of the churches in London, and of friends able to do all that is required of them in the eventful times in which we live. (Cheers.)

W. R. SPICER, Esq., read the financial statement, from which it appeared that last year's balance amounted to 320*l.* 16*s.* 7*d.*; that the income was 6,590*l.*; that the expenditure was 6,012*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.*; and that there was a balance at the end of the financial year of 579*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.* Stock of the value of 2,133*l.* had been sold during the year.

The CHAIRMAN said that whatever their differences of opinion on many subjects, on the object they had met to promote—whether they were doing their duty in the midst of the population of this land, there ought to be no difference. Their object was not as a Christian society to get up distinct organisations, or to establish churches with all the orderly arrangements connected with them, but to suggest and devise methods, often very crude and irregular, by which they could get at the people with a view to influence them, not in seeking to make men and women Congregationalists, but Christians. (Cheers.) There never was a time when the agency of such a society was more needed, though their object was to encourage the doing of the work through county associations, and he hoped the day would come when they would have no direct agency of their own, in consequence of the work being done by the churches in the country. (Cheers.) Never were the working classes more prosperous or getting a larger share of the general prosperity. They needed advice and counsel not from dogmatizing neighbours, but from hearty and sympathising friends, who would try to induce them to husband their resources, and to be putting by for the rainy day. (Applause.) Their influence upon the people would tell the more they interested themselves in their social condition, and therefore he felt that in the class of agents, or evangelists, they were now sending amongst them, many connected with the working classes, speaking their own language, sharing in their feelings, and sympathising heartily with them, they had precisely that class of men whom he liked to see engaged in work of this kind, and multiplied a hundredfold. (Loud cheers.) These men were moving about amongst the cottagers' homes in the country, and give away Bibles—and thank God they had the Bible to give away—they read to and prayed with them, and dealt largely with the daily life of the working class population; and he was persuaded that they could do nothing better to promote the substantial progress of the people, and advance the interests of the country as a whole, than in extending this particular class of agency. His confidence in that society arose from its care and economy in the management of its funds. He believed they were greatly weakened in their work by the fact that religious bodies in England were clashing with each other in the race:—

Our opportunities of usefulness are sufficiently ample for all; and yet we never put down a church without two or three excellent bodies of men coming to put down theirs. We are all impressed with the belief that we each have a testimony to offer; and so we fight and contend with each other. (Laughter and applause.) This is a system which leads to bitter antagonism between congregations, and estrangements and conflicts result instead of the churches for Christ contending with the common enemy. We each profess to have the bread of life to offer to the spiritually destitute; and yet we are quarrelling amongst ourselves as to the size and shape of the loaf we shall give them. (Applause.) This was the subject of consideration at a meeting at which various opinions were ex-

pressed; I do not know whether we made much progress, but I believe we made some in the direction that some remedy ought to be provided. I refer to it to-night, not for the purpose of dogmatizing, but only to say that I am less disposed than ever to contend this evening for any "ism," and I include my own in the number. I know something of the condition of our country villages; and it is distressing to me to see the miserable condition of ministers and people in some of them; and this is a particular difficulty with which we have to deal. There are several ministers in places where there is only room for one; and if these congregations were only brought together there would in six months be a strong and perfect contrast for the better to what now exists. (Cheers.) We ought to endeavour to devise a remedy for this. I see that there are some admirable men who in speaking about union with other churches give it as their opinion that before closer union can be brought about it can only be by some others getting to heaven—(laughter)—but without wishing that any should leave the earth, I do think that some agreement could be come to on the subject to which I have adverted. I do not believe that this remark is applicable to the work of this Home Missionary Society. I can assert that the committee of the society would never dream of going into any village where they found that the Gospel was faithfully preached. We should go any distance rather than spend money upon such a district, or, what is a thousand times more important, lead to an expenditure of loss of temper, conflict, and bitterness that is inevitable to this unhappy sort of antagonism. (Loud cheers.)

He was thankful to say that never a month passed without some evidence of the excellence of the service rendered by the agents of this society, and they had, therefore, the encouragement to prosecute their labours with unabated zeal. (Cheers.)

The Rev. WM. THOMAS, of Leeds, moved that the report be adopted, printed, and published, and that the list of names which were afterwards read be appointed the committee for the year. After stating that he had taken a practical interest in some mission work in the West Riding of Yorkshire for sixteen years, he gave some details of the efficient way in which the work was carried on in that part of the country. In some parts of the country, where were their larger churches, more was being done in home mission work in the surrounding districts than used to be done some years ago. They had mission rooms, and lay preaching had been called into exercise, such as used not to be the case formerly. Christian men and women were now to be found going from house to house, and doing mission work of the very best kind. As to the work in the rural districts, their sympathy, money contributions, and prayers were required to the utmost. Their friends who lived in these scattered districts were not yet likely to become self-sustaining churches for some time; and those who were more favourably situated must not expect that in a given time this could be accomplished. Then they must take into account that the population was in many places decreasing from year to year, the most active of the young people of both sexes being drawn to the large towns and industrial centres. Mr. Thomas also referred to the character of the preaching in the Church of England in some of those places where they had their mission stations, and also mentioned one or two cases of oppression which had been exercised towards Nonconformists and their pastors, because during the time of church-rates they had spoken against them, and at a recent period for speaking in support of the disestablishment of the Irish Church. With facts such as he had cited, he could confidently appeal for increased liberality on behalf of this home mission work, for they had a right staff of Christian agents honestly labouring to promote the kingdom of God in righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost. (Cheers.)

The Rev. W. A. WRIGLEY, of Carlisle, in seconding the motion, briefly referred to the work they were carrying on in Cumberland, and to the zeal which had been infused amongst them by a deputation from Lancashire, headed by Mr. Morley. The assistance of that society, and also that from Lancashire, was of the greatest benefit. He said they were spending more than 500*l.* in the year, and stated that from notes that had been made for a conference at Cockermouth, it appeared that five of their evangelists had held during the preceding year 741 meetings for the purpose of reading the Bible to the people; four had paid 5,917 visits; three had read the Scriptures at 4,412 distinct times; five had distributed 5,722 Gospel tracts; and one had travelled in the discharge of his duties 1,100 miles. He also spoke of the substantial character of the work which was done, stating that at one station it was reported that fourteen persons had given their hearts to God.

The Rev. THOMAS JONES, of Swansea, spoke of the claims of the society. It was a "home" mission:—

I love my native home. The bones of the fathers are here; here I first saw the light, fell in love. Dear England—dearer Wales! Beautiful England—more beautiful Wales! When I go to my home, there are some things that displease me very much. Gentlemen who have made money come over from England and spoil the beautiful wildness of the Welsh landscape, by changes which prove their own clumsy taste. (Laughter.) I like to go through the old graveyard and read the names of the grey-headed men and women I knew when a little boy. But that home feeling into your preaching. Give me a man who loves his home. In the Welsh, "to be present with the Lord" is literally "to make my home with the Lord." I would speak my most sweet, eloquent, and intense words for such a society. It is a society to make our home beautiful. Englishmen, you ought to love your home, and work for your society supremely if for no other reasons, for this, that it is a Home Missionary Society. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. PARKER proposed the second resolution, which, while deploring the amount of spiritual destitution still prevailing among the rural population of England, acknowledged the Divine blessing which had attended the agencies of this society. In the course of his speech he referred to the remarkable awakening of the agricultural mind, and rejoiced that our farm-labourers had the right sort of leaders—

I find that the leaders of this agricultural movement are, generally speaking, Christian men and women who have been found out by some Home Missionary Association—the breath of the Gospel has passed over them, and they have lived under its benediction. And it will always be found to be so. Where there is Christian life there will be found to be other life; where there is religious feeling there will be the most generous and noble feeling in all possible directions. I rejoice when any movement, political or social, falls into the hands of men who know the golden rule, having studied it at the foot of the cross. Now that the agricultural mind has been waked up, we must take care what sort of men we send. There are critical men in the villages—men who have their heads on their shoulders while they are following the plough. The men who organise such movements as these will bring their common sense with them when they come to the village chapel on Sundays. I believe we shall go right if we send there men who are deeply learned in the original language—human nature. Human nature is the universal tongue; he who can speak to the human heart speaks all languages. (Cheers.) Tears have no grammar—pathos cannot be declined as a substantive, or conjugated as a verb. There is an accent about a true life which men instantly know, and to which in general they instantly respond. The men whom we send must be men who know human life, who have been knocked about in the great world, have been broken and chipped—have suffered much, and are able to speak to men words which go straight into the heart. I don't wish to send men who shall be able to compete with the Established clergy in social status or technical culture. In some cases we are none the worse for a contrast. Sometimes the simplest man may cause those who have been slumbering out their little day, and have not realised the necessity of toiling through their golden hours, to arouse themselves—may provoke those to see what they can do in their way to serve the interests of the Church of Christ; and sometimes when these greater men make the attempt they find themselves unexpectedly worsted in the contest.

They had heard a very touching description of home. If home were so rich in associations and traditions, what should they say about their brethren who had left it to dwell in foreign lands? They must not forget those men who had bid adieu to the place of their father's sepulchre, who had clasped their mother's hand for the last time, who had touched the old arm-chair perhaps never to touch it again, isolated their lives for the Lord Jesus, and found a home for Christ's sake in other lands. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. EDMOND, in supporting the resolution, referred to the triad of immortal parables spoken by our Lord, and which, in his view, should be taken as one parable. In the Old Testament the shepherd was seen seeking the sheep; they lived now in the dispensation of the Spirit, illustrated by the gentle woman who, with lighted candle, was searching the house for the lost piece of silver; and they looked forward with hope to the day when the Father's love would be manifested in the uprising of the great heart of poor humanity, saying, "I will arise, and go to my Father." (Applause.)

The Rev. Dr. HEALY, of Straight University, gave a sketch of the home missionary work in which he had been engaged in the United States, and referred to the amounts contributed in that country, where he said he knew persons mortgaged their property to provide means to give to the cause of God, and mentioned the case of a young girl of sixteen, who had arranged to work an extra hour every day to enable her to give 100 dollars to this object. Had they a spirit of self-sacrifice largely manifested, the funds of this society would be very largely increased. (Cheers.)

On the motion of Mr. SINCLAIR, a vote of thanks was presented to the Chairman.

Mr. MORLEY, in responding, said he could not allow the opinion to go abroad that the contributions to this society were the measure of what was done for this cause, for to that sum must be added the funds of the local agencies. At the same time, he should rejoice in a large increase of the funds of this society, in the operations of which he took a very lively interest.

The proceedings were concluded with the doxology.

#### LONDON CITY MISSION.

The annual meeting of this society was held on Thursday, May 2nd, in Exeter Hall, under the presidency of R. C. L. Bevan, Esq. The hall was not quite filled, but there was a very large attendance. The proceedings commenced, as usual, by singing, after which the Rev. John Robinson offered prayer.

The CHAIRMAN, in the course of his opening speech, said:—We are on the top of the wave; and we may truly thank God who has so lengthened our cords; but we must remember that sometimes extension is a cause of weakness, and whilst we rejoice that the cords are lengthened, we have need to pray that the stakes may be strengthened. Now, everything that is human, even though it is Divine in its origin, has a tendency to degenerate; and I believe, if we are not very careful, this great mission will degenerate. If the tendency is not resisted, we shall become secular, and forget the great object for which the mission was established by its noble founders, at the head

of whom were Sir Fowell Buxton, Mr. Nasmyth, Mr. Baptist Noel, and others. Let us remember that the great object of the mission is not to reclaim profligates of both sexes, though our missionaries do send many to refuges, and do persuade many who are living together unmarried to marry. Nor is it always our object to reclaim drunkards, though many drunkards are reclaimed. Nor to reform thieves, though many thieves have become honest men. Then, again, it is not our object to promote cleanliness, but I believe that this mission has done more to promote cleanliness in the habitations of the poor than can be well imagined. Again, let me say that the mission is not expected to effect the conversion of London. We have no such expectation as that; but what we do desire is to carry the Gospel message to every one who will receive our missionaries. Of course, if people shut their doors against them, they cannot deliver the message unless it be by thrusting a tract under the door, or something of that kind. I am sure they leave no stone unturned to gather in a few, and if possible many, from the midst of an ungodly people, to the glory of our common Lord and Saviour. If those persons who have perhaps rendered a great benefit to society by examining the reports of various institutions would scrutinise ours, they would find that as much goes to the direct work of the society as in the case of any institution in the country, and perhaps more than in most. (Cheers.)

The Rev. J. GARWOOD then read portions of the annual report, which acknowledged with gratitude the progress made by the society during the year. The annual income was stated to be 40,598*l.*, and the expenditure 40,223*l.* 18*s.*, leaving a balance of 374*l.* 13*s.* 11*d.* There were also additional receipts for the Disabled Missionaries Fund. The number of visits paid by the society's missionaries during the year was said to be 2,210,221; to the sick and dying, 235,113; Scriptures distributed, 7,151; tracts, 3,187,038; books lent, 47,513; indoor meetings and Bible-classes held, 38,711; gross attendance at these, 1,071,145; attendance at 2,856 outdoor services, 310,728; new communicants, 1,503; restored to church communion, 313; families induced to commence family prayer, 598; drunkards reclaimed, 1,227; unmarried couples induced to marry, 291; fallen women admitted to asylums, restored to their homes, or otherwise rescued, 541; shops closed on the Lord's day, 184.

The Rev. EDWARD GARBETT, in moving the adoption of the report, said there were two truths that stood out prominently upon the surface of the report. One of these was the existence in the heart of the metropolis of an enormous evil; and the other was the possession of a sufficient remedy. The evil was the existence of vast masses among the metropolitan population who had relapsed into a state of heathen darkness, and were living without hope, because without God in the world. The remedy was the grand old remedy brought into the world 2,000 years ago, and which was now just as strong and as fresh as it was in apostolic days—the plain, simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. (Applause.)

The Rev. DONALD FRASER, D.D., seconded the resolution in an eloquent speech, in which he dwelt upon

The Rev. Canon NISBET, rector of St. Giles's, moved the following resolution:—

That this meeting, encouraged by the fact that the increased efforts of the mission have this year, for the first time for a long period, exceeded the requirements needed for the increase in the population of the metropolis, desires to be animated to still more vigorous efforts both to provide for the visitation of the constantly increasing masses of the people, and also to continue the past year's progress in overtaking former neglects with reference to the old population still unreached by the efforts of this or other societies.

He said he had lately made inquiries of the city missionaries working in his parish, with a view of ascertaining the attendance of the people at places of worship, and the result was that ninety per cent. of the adult population never attended any place of worship whatever. He was glad to bear testimony to the value of the labours of the missionaries of the London City Mission. He had lately inquired of those in his district whether they were often refused, and it appeared that they were only refused in seven per cent. of the families whom they sought to visit.

Mr. W. S. ALLEN, M.P., in seconding the resolution, said that he had long entertained a peculiar affection for the London City Mission, because he had been taught as a child by a holy mother to love it. He admired it especially for the broad basis on which it stood. The London City missionaries, he believed, were far better friends of the working men of the metropolis than any political agitators or infidel lecturers. What the men and women wanted to make them happy was religion, not Republicanism.

The Rev. J. FLEMING, in moving a vote of thanks to the chairman, bore testimony to the value of the labours of the missionaries of the society, and said that the Gospel which they carried to the homes they visited would prove the truest safeguard to the Government and the throne of the country.

The Rev. SAMUEL COLEY, in seconding the resolution, said he believed that every effort was made by the society to select true and godly men as their agents—not men who were like the statues on a staircase, holding out a globe of light, but never feeling a beam themselves; or like the marble lions in the Alhambra, that were continually pouring forth water but never tasting it. They were men who had themselves experienced the blessing of God's religion in their own hearts, and were therefore able to speak blessing to others.

The vote was carried and briefly acknowledged by the chairman, and the proceedings were brought to a close with the Benediction.

## MASON AND HAMLIN'S CABINET ORGANS.

Messrs. METZLER and CO. have the pleasure to announce that they have made arrangements with the MASON and HAMLIN ORGAN COMPANY for the SOLE AGENCY for the Sale of their Instruments in the United Kingdom. Messrs. METZLER and Co. have shown these Instruments to a few of the most eminent professional men in London, and have received the following Testimonials in their favour:—

Gentlemen,—I entertain the highest opinion of Mason and Hamlin's Cabinet Organs. The tone is mellow and free from reediness, the touch excellent; and altogether I believe these Instruments are destined to be very popular in this country.  
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2, Manchester-square, Jan. 26, 1872.

Yours truly,  
JULIUS BENEDICT.

The Specimens of the American Organs which I have examined at Messrs. Metzler and Co.'s are remarkably sweet and even-toned throughout the various registers, and are free from many of the objections I have hitherto entertained of Manual Reed Instruments. Moreover, they have a good touch, and are capable of some charming effects and pleasing combinations. The appearance of these organs in solid walnut-wood, and brightly gilt pipes in front, is greatly in their favour. Altogether, I can very strongly recommend these Instruments.

WM. SPARK, Mus. D., Organist of the Town Hall, Leeds.

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Gentlemen,—I have played upon several of your "Mason and Hamlin's Cabinet Organs," and consider them to be very satisfactory Instruments. The tone is exceedingly sweet, the speech quick, and the manipulation easy.

Sydenham, S.E., 23rd Jan., 1872.

Faithfully yours,  
W. J. WESTBROOK.

I have just tried and examined several of Mason and Hamlin's Organs at Messrs. Metzler and Co.'s, and I find the tone to be unusually mellow, sweet, and equal. The touch of the Instrument is also light, elastic, and free from lumpiness.

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I have a very high opinion of the "Mason and Hamlin Cabinet Organ." Although the sounds are produced from reeds, the quality of tone is extremely rich and sympathetic, almost equal to that obtained from pipes. It is very easy to blow, and great effects are produced by the Automatic Swell. The octave coupler and sub-bass add greatly to the richness of the Instrument, which is remarkable for purity of tone. For Sacred Music at home the "Mason and Hamlin Cabinet Organ" is very desirable, and in many respects that could easily be pointed out it possesses great advantages over the small-priced pipe organs.

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At the request of Messrs. Metzler and Co., we have tried and examined several of Messrs. Mason and Hamlin's Cabinet Organs, and we find the tone of these Instruments to be full, powerful, and of agreeable quality, with an absence of reediness; the articulation is rapid, and the touch very good. They appear to us to be the best substitute for a pipe organ.

BRINLEY RICHARDS,  
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Gentlemen,—I have always entertained the opinion that Mason and Hamlin's Cabinet Organs are of the very best class of that description of Instrument. The tone is beautiful; the touch is light and very elastic. Those Instruments that are supplied with pedals give the amateur every opportunity of becoming acquainted with the grand music of Sebastian Bach; and, if they only persevere, they will be amply rewarded.

To Messrs. Metzler and Co., Great Marlborough-street.

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Promises of Donations to the Building Fund, or of Annual Subscriptions, will be gratefully received, and further information afforded, by the Hon. Secretary, Woodville, Gravesend, Kent.

### PEACE SOCIETY.

The FIFTY-SIXTH PUBLIC ANNIVERSARY of the Peace Society will be held in FINSBURY CHAPEL, Moorfields, on TUESDAY EVENING, May 21st, 1872.

The Chair will be taken by JOSEPH W. PEASE, Esq., M.P., at Half-past Six o'clock.

The Meeting will be addressed by Rev. Robert Moffat, D.D.; Rev. Dr. Healy, President of Straight University, New Orleans; J. A. Mundella, Esq., M.P.; Henry Richard, Esq., M.P.; Rev. Dr. Hannay; Thomas Snape, Esq.; Rev. T. H. Pattison.

### BRITISH and FOREIGN SAILORS' SOCIETY.

The Rev. Dr. PARKER, of the Poultry Chapel, will (D.V.) preach the ANNIVERSARY SERMON for this Society, at the CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, ECCLESTON-SQUARE, Pimlico, on TUESDAY EVENING, May 21st.

Service to commence at Seven o'clock.

MAY, 1872.

**EIGHT DAYS of UNITED PRAYER** and THANKSGIVING in reference to the Present Condition of Christian Nations and to the Condition of the Jews, Mahomedans, and the Heathen World.

In harmony with the suggestions arising out of a correspondence between Dr. Merle d'Aubigné and Mr. Kinnaird—

1. That the Week beginning SUNDAY, the 19th May, and ending the 25th, should be set apart for special prayer by Christians throughout the world for the above objects.

2. That not only where practicable public meetings for prayer should be held, but that everywhere private and social prayers should specially be offered up.

3. That the subject of Intercessory Prayer should form a prominent topic in the Sermons preached and Addresses given on SUNDAY, the 19th May.

The Central Meetings in London will be held, God willing, on Sunday Afternoon, May 19, at 3 o'clock, at

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS.

Chairman, Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P.

Monday Morning, May 20, at 11 o'clock, at

FREEMASONS' HALL.

Chairman, Joseph Tritton, Esq.

Tuesday Evening, May 21, at 7 o'clock, at

FREEMASONS' HALL.

Chairman, Sir Donald Macleod, K.C.S.I., C.B.

Friday Evening, May 24th, at 7 o'clock, at

FREEMASONS' HALL.

Chairman, Hugh M. Matheson, Esq.

Saturday Morning, May 25, at 11 o'clock, at

FREEMASONS' HALL.

Chairman, Joseph Hoare, Esq.

Sunday Afternoon, May 26, at 3 o'clock, at

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS.

Chairman, Major-General Lake, C.S.I.

For Daily Meetings to be held in other parts of London, see bills on boardings, &c.

NO TICKETS REQUIRED.

**THE ANNUAL MEETING** of the EVANGELICAL CONTINENTAL SOCIETY will be held in the POULTRY CHAPEL, on TUESDAY EVENING, May 28. The Chair will be taken at 7 o'clock, by CHARLES REED, Esq., M.P.

It is expected that the following gentlemen will address the Meeting:—M. le Pasteur Passy, from Bordeaux, and the Revs. Dr. Blackwood, of the Established Church; Dr. Edmond, of the Presbyterian Church, Highbury; Dr. Ferguson, A. Hannay, Secretary of the Congregational Union; Dr. Healy, of Straight University, New Orleans; A. J. Murray, A.M., of the Scotch Free Church, Croydon; Dr. Parker, of the Poultry Congregational Chapel, and Dr. Underhill, Secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society.

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